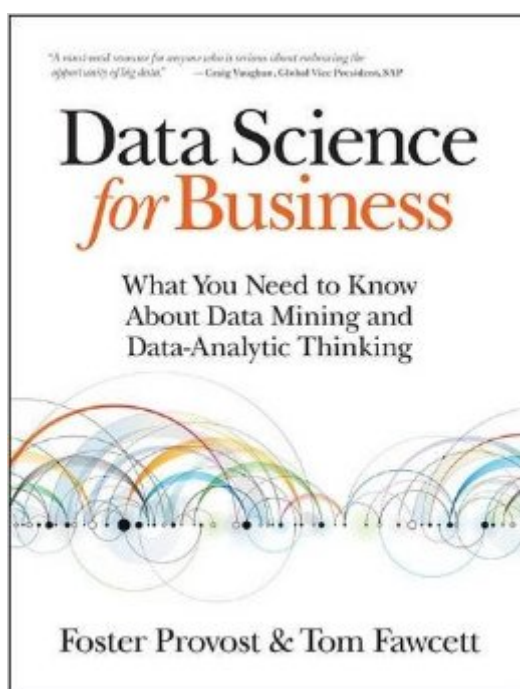


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# Data Science For Business: What You Need To Know About Data Mining And Data-Analytic Thinking



## Synopsis

Written by renowned data science experts Foster Provost and Tom Fawcett, *Data Science for Business* introduces the fundamental principles of data science, and walks you through the "data-analytic thinking" necessary for extracting useful knowledge and business value from the data you collect. This guide also helps you understand the many data-mining techniques in use today. Based on an MBA course Provost has taught at New York University over the past ten years, *Data Science for Business* provides examples of real-world business problems to illustrate these principles. You'll not only learn how to improve communication between business stakeholders and data scientists, but also how to participate intelligently in your company's data science projects. You'll also discover how to think data-analytically, and fully appreciate how data science methods can support business decision-making. Understand how data science fits in your organization and how you can use it for competitive advantage. Treat data as a business asset that requires careful investment if you're to gain real value. Approach business problems data-analytically, using the data-mining process to gather good data in the most appropriate way. Learn general concepts for actually extracting knowledge from data. Apply data science principles when interviewing data science job candidates.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A must-read resource for anyone who is serious about embracing the opportunity of big data."--  
Craig Vaughan, Global Vice President at SAP  
"This book goes beyond data analytics 101. It's the

essential guide for those of us (all of us?) whose businesses are built on the ubiquity of data opportunities and the new mandate for data-driven decision-making."--Tom Phillips CEO of Media6Degrees and Former Head of Google Search and Analytics "Data is the foundation of new waves of productivity growth, innovation, and richer customer insight. Only recently viewed broadly as a source of competitive advantage, dealing well with data is rapidly becoming table stakes to stay in the game. The authors' deep applied experience makes this a must read--a window into your competitor's strategy."-- Alan Murray Serial Entrepreneur; Partner at Coriolis Ventures "This timely book says out loud what has finally become apparent: in the modern world, Data is Business, and you can no longer think business without thinking data. Read this book and you will understand the Science behind thinking data."-- Ron Bekkerman Chief Data Officer at Carmel Ventures "A great book for business managers who lead or interact with data scientists, who wish to better understand the principles and algorithms available without the technical details of single-disciplinary books."-- Ronny Kohavi Partner Architect at Microsoft Online Services Division

What you need to know about data mining and data-analytic thinking

When trying to learn about a new field, one of the most common difficulties is to find books (and other materials) that have the right "depth". All too often one ends up with either a friendly but largely useless book that oversimplifies or a heavy academic tome that, though authoritative and comprehensive, is condemned to sit gathering dust in one's shelves. "Data Science for Business" gets it just right. What I mean might become clearer if I point out what this book is *not*:- It is *not* a computer science textbook with a focus on theoretical derivations and algorithms.- It is *not* a "cookbook" that provides "step-by-step" guidance with little to no explanation of what one is doing.- It is *not* your standard "management" title on the cool tech du jour available at airport stands and meant to be read in one sitting (buzzwords, hype and overly enthusiastic statements making up for the dearth of actual content). Instead, it is close to being the perfect guide for the intelligent reader who -- regardless of whether s/he has a tech background -- has a sincere desire to learn how the tools and principles of data science can be used to extract meaningful information from huge datasets. Highly recommended.

At its core, Data science is the elimination of guess, intuition, hunch and decisions backed by Data. Data Science is ranked the Sexiest Job Of 21st Century by Harvard Business Review. Today there is a tremendous demand for everything "Data Science", Companies need "Data scientists", IT

resources are refocusing themselves to be the "Data scientists". Contrary to popular beliefs that Marketing benefits a lot from data science, companies are finding benefits across the spectrum of their operations . Example : A leading Trucking company used Data mining skill to predict which part of the truck is going to break next instead of replacing it at specific intervals, a Leading insurer predicted those who will complete their antibiotic course based on their home ownership history. If this type of stories and scope interests you, read the book "Big Data: A Revolution That Will Transform How We Live, Work, and Think".I am an aspiring "Data Scientist" and so this review will have a slight tilt from a "Data Scientist" perspective over the business user.

**WHAT THIS BOOK IS**

?This book is very well written ,but not for the faint heart. It is a text book and authors have taken lot of care so general audience can also benefit from it, and also not to dilute it's textbook value. To get the full benefit of the book, read about 50 pages ( Do not flip pages), never more than 10 -15 pages per session. The book is intense so you will need to take a break in between or will lose the thread. Once you are finished with fifteen pages, go to the first page and read , highlight the important areas and then go to the next page. So plan to read this book in a span of 2 -3 months. I know it is slow but if you want to understand the inner workings of "Data science", there is not much other option. Alternative is to flip across several superficial articles that is a staple diet of every blog and magazines.

**WHAT THIS BOOK WILL DELIVER**

?When you are finished with the book, you should have a fairly good understanding of data science, For example, what type of analysis that needs to be done to identify

- A. Will the Customer switch loyalty ? ( Yes / No )
- B. What type of customers will cancel my subscription ? ( Ex : Middle Aged male from Manhattan will be 5% more likely to switch)
- C. What are the methodologies to identify If I can up-sell a customer ( Ex : Someone who bought this book also bought )
- D. What is a supervised Segmentation and When will you use it ? ( When the target is clear, if the person will default on his loan)
- E. What is the significance of entropy in Data Science ?
- F. Exposure to several formula's ( sleep triggers as I call it). Many of the tools have in-built formula's but you still need some idea what these formula's are.
- G. Don't get defensive, be comfortable when your colleague sprinkles words like like Classification ,regression, Similarity Matching, Clustering, Modelling, Entropy etc.

**WHAT ELSE YOU WILL NEED**

?Data Science does not exist in silo. It helps in decision making . So should be your learning, Here are my suggestions:

1. First and foremost, you need to spend consistent time. If you are running short of time, don't even bother to start
2. For those who are interested in understanding Data science, courseera dot org conducts a free 8 weeks course on "Introduction To Data Science" by an eminent Stanford Professor. It needs time and Commitment
3. You can get real life examples to work on in coursesolve dot org ( ex: Analyze the sleep cycle)
4. As a Data Scientist, you will need to understand

"Big Data" . Browse an article and even experts use Data Science and Big Data interchangeably. Hadoop is the core of Big Data, but it is a world of its own.<sup>5</sup> Read and start experimenting with Hadoop , PIG , HIVE, HBASE and the variations it offers. I did a basics training at edureka dot in , an Indian firm, not a great training but enough for you to understand and then go on your own. But if time and money permits, go to cloudera website and sign up for training. you will not go wrong<sup>6</sup>. I signed up for elastic map reduce which has a higher level abstraction (for developers it is the difference between using sqlplus vs TOAD). It is not free but very cheap.<sup>7</sup> Try to be the "umbilical cord that looks for a stomach to plug ", look for a mentor, look for opportunity in your firm or elsewhere to grow your Data scientist skills. For those looking for inspiration , google for Rayid Ghani, Chief Data Scientist at Obama 2012 Campaign.

The institution strategy and goals need to be reflected in the procedures used to analyse the data base of the institution and the determination as to what data is relevant. The book discusses ways to obtain the data needed and the short term volatility in return to the company that can result. But the authors show that this can eventually lead to improved efficiency focus and profitability for the company. The book requires a background in a number of supportive academics for full understanding . The discipline has defined its own language much like most of the technological disciplines and is best appreciated by those familiar with the vocabulary. It is a book that warrants study not just as a quick read for introduction. For a person studying or practicing in this area I highly recommend this book for both its interest and as a reference book. Foster Provost and Tom Fawcett have made a valuable contribution to the understanding of Data Science.

This is an excellent textbook on data science. The text itself explains concepts and theories well and provides definitions, examples, and formulas that help the reader understand and apply these concepts. The information presented is well-organized, and the visual aids include ample graphs and charts. Section breaks are obvious with well-designed titles. Chapters are easy enough to read but don't over-simplify important concepts. Inclusion of Glossary, Bibliography, and index, as well as a detailed table of contents, makes it easy to navigate. The only exception our instructor took with the text during my course was their insistence that only the best data scientists should be considered. Removing this bias, the information provided was clear, concise, and helpful for anyone working with big data or in data analytics.

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Data Science for Business: What You Need to Know about Data Mining and Data-Analytic Thinking

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